

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday July 23rd 2006

Wireless Public Address System (WPAS)

As we informed you in a recent bulletin, ComReg launched a Wireless Public Address system on the 22nd of June last. This system will allow for the licensing of religious and community organisations to transmit services and events for the benefit of people in local communities throughout the country.

Eighty 10 kHz channels between 27.6 and 27.995 MHz are to be made available under the system. Base station ERP is to be 1 watt AM and 4 watts FM from a vertical antenna.

The channels at 27.995 and 27.99125 MHz are of particular concern to radio experimenters as they are respectively only 5 and 8.75 kHz from the lower limit of the exclusive amateur allocation commencing at 28 MHz.

The matter was taken up by the Society with ComReg in a letter of the 5th of July in which arguments for not having channels so close to the 28 MHz band were put forward. This was followed by a meeting on Wednesday last.

ComReg however, take the view that licensed Wireless Public Address Systems operating within their licence conditions will not cause interference to experimenter stations operating close to the low end of the 28 MHz band. In support of its view ComReg pointed out that a similar system called Community Audio Distribution System had been operating on a trial basis in parts of England and Northern Ireland since 2004 without problems. ComReg agreed to consider notifying suppliers of the service that it might be advisable to avoid using the channel at 27.995 MHz in the interests of minimising the likelihood of interference.

ComReg will probably commence issuing licences under the new system in early August. Experimenters should listen out for these transmissions in channels close to the 28 MHz band. If any such transmissions encroach in any way on this band, try to establish the identity and location of the station concerned and the operating frequency and report the matter and the nature of the interference to Seán Nolan EI7CD who is the Society's liaison person with ComReg. Seán's address is OK in the current call book or in the call book section of the IRTS website at www.irts.ie

You can also e-mail the information to "ei7cd at gofree dot indigo dot ie" we are only interested in WPAS transmissions that cause some kind of interference to the 28 MHz band. Full details of the new WPAS scheme is in ComReg Document 06/26 which is

available on the ComReg website at www.comreg.ie

Allocation in the Region of 500 kHz

The Society recently submitted a proposal to ComReg for a small allocation to experimenters in the region of 500 kHz.

The Ofcom report on the Aeronautical and Maritime Radiocommunications Services indicates that apart from 490 and 518 kHz which carry the NAVTEX component of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) there is little traffic in the band 415 to 526.5 kHz. Beginning in the late 1990s, most countries ended the monitoring of Morse transmissions on 500 kHz.

The Ofcom report also indicates that an allocation to the amateur service in the vicinity of 500 kHz would be worthy of consideration. The proposal made by the IRTS is similar to one being considered by Ofcom, which was made to it by the RSGB.

Continuation of 5 MHz allocation in UK

In July 2002, provision was made for full licence holders in the UK to apply to use five spot-frequencies in the region of 5 MHz for a four-year trial period. Permission to operate on these frequencies was given by way of a Notice of Variation to existing licensees. The permissions were for experimental purposes particularly in relation to Near Vertical Incidence Skywave (NVIS). Three beacons are also operating from different locations in the UK on 5.290 MHz and a beacon DRA5 is operating from near Kiel in Germany on 5.195 MHz.

Permissions were due to expire on the 31st of July 2006. On the 19th of July however, Ofcom agreed to permit the continued use of the spot frequencies until the 30th of June 2010 and added two further frequencies. The frequencies are 5260, 5280, 5290, 5368, 5373, 5400 and 5405 kHz with a bandwidth of 3 kHz.

The IRTS has raised with ComReg on a number of occasions the possibility of allocating the same spot frequencies to experimenters here but without success. The extension of the facilities for a further four-year period in the UK strengthens our case. The matter will be raised again at a meeting with ComReg to take place later this year.

The National Co-ordinator would like to remind EI amateurs of the Emergency Centre of Activity Frequencies adopted by the IARU Region 1 General Conference 2005.

These are not channels for exclusive Emergency only use, but are preferred, centre frequencies, for such activities.

The centre frequencies are as follows. Global Centre of Activity per band:

15 metres - 21,360 kHz. 17 metres - 18,160 kHz. 20 metres - 14,300 kHz.

Region 1 Centre of Activity per band: 40 metres - 7,060 kHz. 80 metres - 3,760 kHz.

Should you hear emergency traffic in or around these frequencies, you are advised not to transmit unless taking active part in the Emergency traffic net. These frequencies are listed on the news page of the AREN web site at www.aren.ie

Slievenamon Trophy

The Slievenamon Trophy is awaiting the station who has the most 70 centimetre activity during the month of July each year, all simplex contacts on any mode will count towards the award, so if possible give a listen across the band and work any stations that you hear as it is open to both fixed and portable stations.

South Dublin Radio Club

South Dublin Radio Club are carrying out Theory classes every Tuesday between 8.00 p.m. and 10.00 p.m. in the Marian Community Centre, Marian Road, Tempelogue. The classes are run on an ongoing basis with an informal structure and anyone interested in radio are welcome to drop in at any time.

DX and Special Events

EI7GK is QRV from Mexico as XE1/EI7GK. Listen on 14.268 MHz when band conditions are good. Best time for hearing Mexico is 06:00 to 08:00 local time.

Members of the Limerick Radio Club are QRV as EI60LRC until the end of the year to mark 60 years of the club. Activity is on 80 to 10 metres. QSL is via EI8EM.

Kerry Amateur Radio Group will run a DXpedition from Beginish Island (near Valentia Island, Co. Kerry) on the 29th and 30th of July.

NM7H is QRV from Qatar as A7/G0MKT and will remain active until early September. Activity is on 40, 30 and 20 meters CW and PSK. QSL is via EA7FTR.

F4CKP will be QRV on RTTY and SSB from 80 to 10 metres from Martinique until the end of August. QSL is via home call.

XQ4CW and CE6TBN will operate SSB and CW as CE5S from Santa Maria Island from the 27th to the 31st of July. QSL is via HA1AG.

GB1CPB, representing GB One Century Portland Bill, will be QRV until the end of 2006, from Portland Bill Lighthouse in Dorset to commemorate 100 years operation of the lighthouse.

Radio Amateurs in Mongolia have been authorised to replace their prefix with JV800 for the rest of 2006 to commemorate the 800th anniversary of Mongolian statehood initiated by Chinggis Khan in 1206.

Dates for Your Diary

The SSB Field Day will take place on September the 2nd and 3rd at Garbally College in Ballinasloe.

IOTA will take place from 1200 UTC on Saturday the 29th of July to 1200 UTC on Sunday the 30th of July.

The Autumn Leg of the 2-metre counties contest will take place on the 27th of August.

The Blarney Rally will take place on September the 24th 2006.

Items for inclusion in next weeks Radio News should be forwarded to Mark Wall, EI7IS at QTHR or by phone to 051-853806 or 087-6302026. Items for the radio news can also be faxed to 087 5 6302026. News should be submitted via e-mail to "news at irts dot ie" for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. Please note that items for the radio news should reach the editor no later than midday on Friday.

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